

Milwaukee

MFD & MPD Communication Centers Assessment



June 2018



Homeland Security

OEC/ICTAP

Office of Emergency Communications / Interoperable Communications Technical Assistance Program

[CM#]

Controlled Unclassified Information

Introductions

DHS/OEC

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Agenda

- Introductions
- Methodology & Scope
- Recruitment
- Training
- 9-1-1 Call Processing
- Work Environment
- Leadership & Supervision
- Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP)
- Conclusion
- Questions



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Scope & Methodology

Scope

- General overview of Milwaukee Fire and Police Communication Centers operations as they existed August 1-2, 2017
- Provide recommendations consistent with industry practices

Methodology

- Gathering statistical data
- Reviewing general orders, standard operating procedures and other relevant documents



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Scope & Methodology

Methodology (cont.)

- Interviewing stakeholders
- On-site examination of facilities and equipment
- Observation of police and fire dispatch/call-taking procedures

MFD and MPD Elements Reviewed/Observed

- Call Processing Procedures
- Coordination between the MFD & MPD communication centers
- Recruiting
- Training
- Working Environment
- Leadership
- Continuity of Operations Planning (COOP)



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In-Person Interviews

Personnel Interviewed:

- Police Communications Captain
- Fire Dispatch Manager
- Police Lieutenants & Sergeants
- Fire and Police Call-takers
- Fire and Police Dispatchers
- Fire and Police Technical Staff

Experience ranged from 1 – 20 years

Core set of questions

Interview Questions

Current Practices

Morale

Organization culture

Organization strengths & weaknesses

Training

General Operations

Leadership

Governance

Technology



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On-site Observations

- Capability to support current operations and possible future changes
- Areas of operations
- Call taking and transfers
- Fire and police dispatch
- Service level staffing
- Technology
 - CAD; fire and police
 - 9-1-1 telephone system
 - Radio system



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Recruitment

- Hiring process has been reduced to three months.
- Job recruits do not have a good understanding of the demands of the Call Taker/Dispatcher positions.
- Recruits do not understand what shift work entails and how it impacts their daily lives and their relationship with their families
- Continued use of Criticall® testing will assist in selecting appropriate applicants

Recruitment Recommendations

- Consider expanding the City's recruitment program to local high schools and armed services members about to leave active duty.
- Consider developing a presentation for applicants that discusses the reality of working in the PSCC, to include detailing the stress entailed in handling sensitive and time critical calls and the impact shift work can have on family life. All applicants should be required to attend a presentation of this nature and spend time observing PSCC operations.

FD Training

Fire

- Approximate 6 month program
- Third shift Senior Fire Dispatcher primarily responsible for overseeing training
- Each trainee is assigned a primary and secondary communications training officer (CTO)
 - Secondary trainer used with primary is not available
 - CTO receives compensation



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FD Training Sections

- Call-taking classroom training
- Call-taking on-the-job training with CTO
- Solo call-taking with periodic review
- Dispatch classroom training
- Dispatch on-the-job training with CTO
- Solo dispatch with periodic review
- Continuing Education
- CTO and Supervisor

FD Training Recommendations

- Consider designating a dedicated full-time staff member to oversee all aspects of the training program
- Formalize the CTO program, ensuring CTOs receive initial and on-going professional development training.
- Increase use of simulation/scenario-based training, where applicable.
- Provide initial and on-going professional development training for FD supervisory personnel.
- Consider developing joint MFD/MPD training for new hires, when practical, to include training that covers common areas of responsibility.



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PD Training

Police

Approximately 30 weeks

Provided by the Technical Communication
Sergeant and two Senior ECOs

Classroom training shortened to accommodate
surge of new hires



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MPD Training Recommendations

Monitor initial training sessions to ensure they run the full 40 days as stipulated in the MPD's SOP.

Consider having agency experts, such as Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT), bomb squad, K-9, and other specialty units, provide an overview of their functions, emphasizing the critical role the ECO plays in providing accurate and timely information to sworn staff.

Develop an in-service training professional development program for all Communications Center staff members.

9-1-1 Call Processing

Goal of public safety communications is to provide field units and citizens with effective service. Currently:

- Two separate communication centers
- Two separate sets of call-takers
- Current process requires that the initial 9-1-1 call be handled twice for a fire or medical service response
- Causes delays
- Frustrates the caller
- Separate CADs can cause inaccurate call handling time



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9-1-1 Call Transfer

- All 9-1-1 calls are answered by MPD
- MPD does initial call interrogations
- If Fire or EMS call it is transferred to MFD
- Caller is questioned a second time by MFD call-taker
- If a call that requires MPD in addition to MFD the caller will be transferred back to MPD call-taker to provide additional info



Common Incident

- MFD and MPD operate on separate CAD and radio channels
- Information has to be relayed by phone or in-person
- May cause delays in relaying information or miscommunications
- Information has to be quickly shared between agencies on high priority calls

Multiple Calls on Same Incident

- High visibility incidents generate multiple calls
- Multiple calls can overwhelm the 9-1-1 center
- MPD transfers calls needing Fire/EMS response
- MFD typically only has 3-4 call-takers
- MPD call-takers may not know MFD has the call or all the incident information and transfer the calls again

Multiple Call Handling - Short Term Recommendations

- Explore methods of coordinating responses to common incidents among the two disciplines when the separate MPD and MFD Communications Centers are assigned to the same calls.
- Assess external call handling processes to improve the efficiency of the call transfer process during MFD-only calls and MPD-MFD calls.
- Consider installing a single CAD system for use by both fire and police or establish an interface between the two existing CAD systems.

Multiple Call Handling - Short Term Recommendations

- Identify and use a common radio talkgroup for PSAP-to-PSAP communication between MPD and MFD dispatch and with surrounding agencies that have mutual aid agreements.
- Consider removing services unrelated to the primary PSCC function. Many times, services are placed in the PSCC because of its 24X7 functionality. These services can place an additional workload on the PSCC staff. For example, relocate the MPD's StarChase, DPR, and TRU functions

Multiple Call Handling – Long Term Recommendations

Establish a unified call taking function and a common CAD to process both MPD and MFD calls.

Possible Options:

Identifying one agency as the primary PSAP to handle calls for both departments.

OR

Having Fire and Police Commission establish a combined PSCC with responsibility for handling call taking and dispatching for both the MPD and MFD that reports to the Commission and is independent of fire and police management.



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Multiple Call Handling – Long Term Recommendations (cont)

If a single independent system establish a primary task group, with sub-groups, to research, recommend, and manage the process of consolidation.

Sub-groups could include:

Governance, Leadership, Supervision

Human Resources

Finance/Budget

Policies and Procedures

Technology

Facility

Operations

Training

Include representation of both management and employees,



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Work Environment

- Employee morale
- Continual staffing turnover
- Mandatory overtime
- Inability to use leave time
- Heavy use of FMLA
- Post-traumatic Stress Disorder



Work Environment (cont.)

- Lack of consistency when applying policies and procedures
- Discipline applied unevenly
- Like the career ladder
- Concerned supervisors are appointed on favoritism not merit
- Think promotional test are predetermined since developed in-house by MPD employees

Work Environment Recommendations

- Consider developing a labor/management team to review and address sick leave and FMLA related issues. This team should include human resource personnel from the City who are knowledgeable regarding the FMLA. Consider establishing a critical stress management team comprised entirely of telecommunicators. This team could be designated as a regional asset and include telecommunicators from surrounding agencies.

Work Environment Recommendations

- Consider developing an objective program to formally recognize employees from both PSCCs.
- Educate the public regularly and highlight the PSCC's functions and contributions to the City and its citizens and the individual achievements of PSCC staff members during National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week.
- Recognize PSCC staff members at monthly, quarterly and annual department functions and award ceremonies.
- Develop a plan to promote consistent and equal application and enforcement of rules, policies and regulations by PSCC supervisors on all shifts



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Leadership

Fire

- Directed by a Technical Service Manager
- Responsible for MFD communications, purchase, support and maintenance of all electronic technology systems and applications
- Supported by two assistant managers
 - Dispatch Manager
 - IT/project Manager

Leadership

Fire

- Concern that field and operational management do not fully understand their functions
- Issue orders that make their job more difficult



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Leadership

Police

- Operates under the Risk Management Bureau Assistant Chief
- Developing civilian managers and a career ladder
- Sworn supervisors; usually on a temporary, non-voluntary basis
- Depth of skills and knowledge regarding Communications varies
- Senior EOCs are appointed by management raising concerns of favoritism



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Leadership Recommendations

Continue to develop a career path that offers civilian employees of each agency advancement within their respective PSCC. □

MPD and MFD should consider developing working groups comprised of both field and communications staff to discuss policies, procedures and operational issues impacting employees. □

Develop internal management/employee teams within the two PSCCs to discuss policies, procedures, training, and recognition programs.

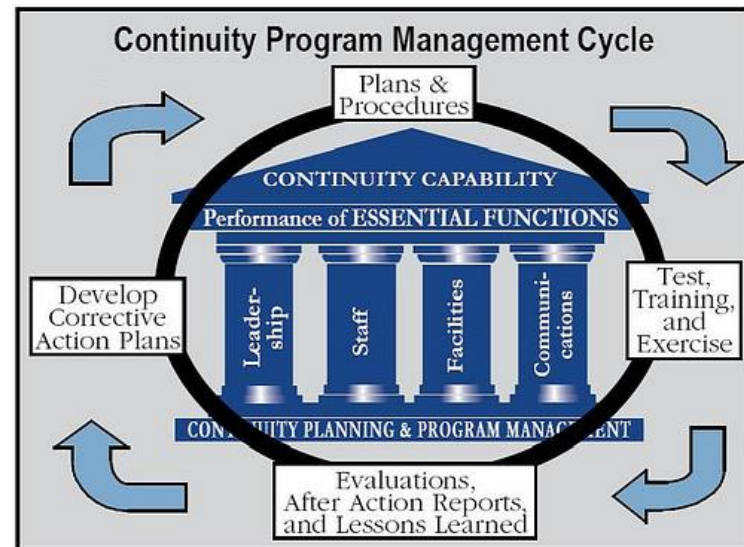
Leadership Recommendations

- The MPD Chief and senior staff needs to reinforce the civilian manager authority and direct both the sworn and civilian staff to abide by the chain of command.

Provide additional training to all sworn police personnel assigned to the Police Technical Communications Division. This should include call taking and dispatch procedures to enhance their understanding of the PSCC's operations and the skills and knowledge necessary to oversee and perform their responsibilities

Continuity of Operations Plan

- Both MFD and MPD have limited continuity of operations plans and backup locations
- Many plans are verbal and not practiced on a regular basis



COOP Recommendations

- Develop a formal COOP that addresses all operational needs.
- Review, update and test the COOP on an on-going and regular basis.

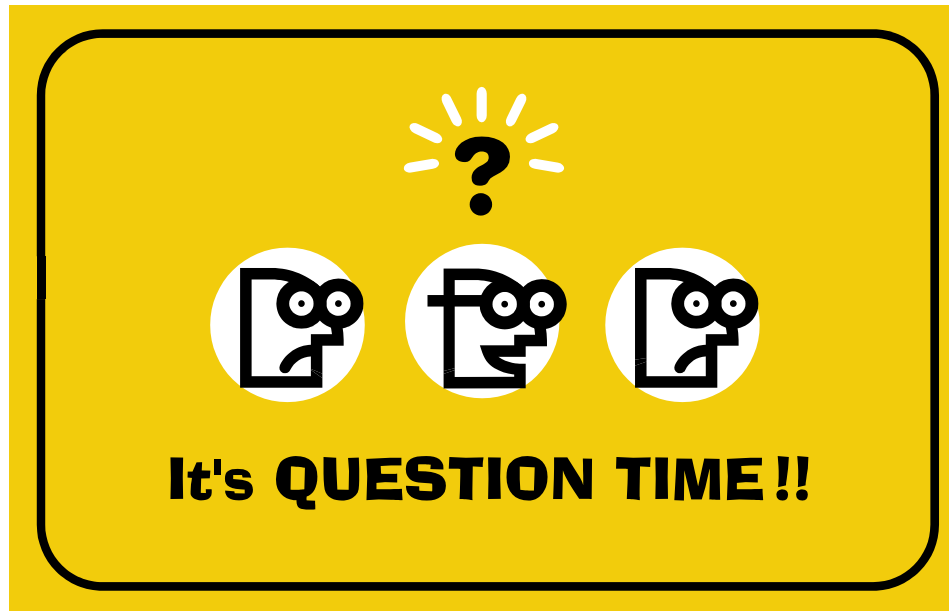


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Questions



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